

La participación de las personas mayores en talleres y su efecto sobre la soledad

Es importante valorar que la calidad de vida de una persona no solo está determinada por la salud física, sino también por la emocional. Existen evidencias del efecto que la soledad o el aislamiento social puede tener en la depresión, la ansiedad, la calidad de vida o incluso la mortalidad. La participación de las personas mayores en cualquier tipo de actividad tiene efectos positivos sobre su calidad de vida y bienestar.

El objetivo de este estudio es comprobar el efecto que tiene la participación de las personas mayores en talleres sobre su sensación de soledad.

Se ha utilizado un diseño cuasi experimental con grupo de control no equivalente y sólo posttest. El grupo experimental ha participado en un taller sobre estimulación cognitiva, el grupo control no ha participado. La muestra estaba formada por 10 personas. Se ha evaluado la soledad con la escala UCLA de soledad formada por 10 ítems y validada en población española por Velarde. (Velarde-Mayol, Fragua-Gil & García-de-Cecilia, 2015)

Los análisis permiten observar la existencia de diferencias significativas entre los dos grupos. Las personas que han participado en el taller poseen unos niveles de soledad menores a las personas que no han participado.

Finalmente, aunque se han encontrado diferencias significativas entre los dos grupos, pueden existir otras variables que no se han evaluado, que pueden tener efecto en la sensación de soledad. El diseño cuasiexperimental posee una validez interna que podría ser aumentada incluyendo, en un posterior estudio, la evaluación pretest para conocer el nivel de soledad previo al inicio de los talleres.

The participation of older people in workshops and their effect on loneliness

1. Introduction

According to data from the United Nations, currently the population over 65 years is increasing considerably, with a forecast that Spain will be the second country in the world with older people, in 2050, after Japan. One of the problems that this implies, among others, is that there are more and more people living alone or in residences, but with a high level of loneliness. (Pinazo & Bellegarde, 2018)

Loneliness can be defined as a negative psychological response to a discrepancy between desired social relations -expectations- and real relationships (Peplau & Perlman, 1982). It is a current problem in society that affects a high percentage of older people and significantly and negatively influences their psychological well-being, since the progressive loss of contact with social relationships can lead to possible depression. (Tuesca et al, 2003)

It is important to appreciate that the quality of life of a person is not only determined by physical health, but also by emotional and that when reaching old age may arise the problem of isolation. It is for this reason that it is a good idea to assess and investigate the relationship between participation and the feeling of loneliness.

2. Objective

The aim of this study is to verify the possible effect of the participation of older people in workshops of cognitive stimulation on their feeling of loneliness.

3. Methodology

Regarding the methodology, a quasi-experimental post-test design has been used, since there is a group of people who have participated in cognitive stimulation workshops and another group that has not participated in the workshops. And what we have measured is the loneliness in the groups, without knowing the level of loneliness they had before starting these workshops. Since the characteristics of the residence we have accessed these people once they had started these activities.

Ten people participated, 5 in the control group and 5 in the experimental group. The control group, which participated in the workshops of cognitive stimulation was formed by 4 women and 1 man and their ages range between 71 and 89 years. The control group was also formed by 5 other people, 4 women and 1 man between 72 and 90 years, these have not participated in the workshops.

For the evaluation of loneliness the scale of solitude of UCLA was used, translated into Spanish by Vázquez & Jiménez in 1994, later validated by López, Del Río & Ruiz in 2014. (Velarde-Mayol, Fragua-Gil & García-de-Cecilia, 2015)

There are multiple instruments to measure the feeling of loneliness but we have selected the scale of solitude of UCLA, since it evaluates the dimension of subjective perception of loneliness.

To carry out the research, a quasi-experimental design has been used in one control group and another experimental group. The experimental group has participated in different workshops of cognitive stipulation of the residence and the control group has not participated in the workshops.

For this purpose, a sample of people who work and participate in the workshops (experimental group) has been sought in the residence and then another sample was selected, as similar as possible, that did not participate in the workshops (control group).

4. Results

Because the sample is very small we use the nonparametric statistics in the comparison of means, specifically the use of the Mann-Whitney U statistic that through the Z statistic tells us that this difference is significant, since $Z = -2,627$, $p = 0.01$.

This difference that we have found, to see if it is significant, we have used nonparametric statistics, since the group is very small, 5 people.

The means of solitude obtained were 23.00, for the control group, which did not participate in the workshops, and an average of 31.60 for the experimental group, residents who did attend the workshops for cognitive stimulation.

Knowing that the loneliness scale of UCLA establishes scores that allow classifying the level of loneliness according to the score obtained, so that scores <20 may indicate a severe degree of loneliness and scores > 20 may indicate a moderate degree of loneliness.

The analyzes carried out with the Mann-Whitney U test show the existence of statistically significant differences between the two groups. People who have participated in the workshop have lower levels of loneliness than people who have not participated with an average score of 31.60.

Due to the characteristics of the residence I could only measure the post. Taking into account that these differences that we have found are not only due to the workshop, there are other variables that can influence, such as gender, time spent in the residence, previous level of solitude, etc.

5. Conclusions

Finally we can conclude that the program has had an influence on the feeling of loneliness but we can not assure that this difference is only due to the intervention in the workshops.

To improve the study in the future what we would need is the sample of people and measure the level of loneliness before they participate in the workshops. Therefore a pre post design, instead of just post. What we consider is to improve the power or reliability of the design, going from a design in which we only use a post to a quasi-experimental design in which we can measure a pre and a post of the solitude construct.

LA PARTICIPACIÓN DE LAS PERSONAS MAYORES EN TALLERES Y SU EFECTO SOBRE LA SOLEDAD

INTRODUCCIÓN

- Es importante valorar que la calidad de vida de una persona no solo está determinada por la salud física, sino también por la emocional. Entre las personas mayores, existe un porcentaje cada vez mayor, de personas que viven solas. Existen evidencias del efecto que la soledad o el aislamiento social puede tener en la depresión, la ansiedad, la calidad de vida o incluso la mortalidad. La participación de las personas mayores en cualquier tipo de actividad tiene efectos positivos sobre su calidad de vida y bienestar (Pinazo & Bellegarde, 2018).
- **Objetivo.** Comprobar el posible efecto que tiene la participación de personas mayores en talleres de estimulación cognitiva sobre su nivel de soledad.
- **Hipótesis.** El nivel de soledad es menor en el grupo que participa en los talleres.

METODOLOGÍA

- **Participantes.** 10 personas, con una media de 82 años de edad.
- **Materiales.** Escala de Soledad de la Universidad de California (UCLA).
- **Procedimiento.** Diseño cuasi experimental de 2 grupos.
- **Análisis.** Se ha utilizado la estadística no paramétrica a través de la prueba U de Mann-Whitney, ($z=-2.627$; $p<0.009$).

RESULTADOS

	Participación en el taller	N	Media	Desviación típica
Soledad	No	5	23.00	2,55
	Si	5	31.60	2,61

> 20 —> sensación moderada de soledad

< 20 —> sensación de soledad severa



CONCLUSIONES

- Se han observado diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre los dos grupos. Sin embargo, pueden existir otras variables que no se han evaluado, que pueden tener efecto en la sensación de soledad.
- El diseño cuasiexperimental posee una validez interna que podría ser mejorada incluyendo, en un posterior estudio, la evaluación pretest para conocer el nivel de soledad previo al inicio de los talleres.

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